

TURKEY

Date of Elections: June 2, 1968

Characteristics of Parliament:

The Parliament, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, consists of two Houses: the 450-strong National Assembly, elected for four years, and the Senate, which comprises three categories of parliamentarians, some nominated by the President of the Republic, others who are *ex-officio* members and, finally, 150 senators elected by universal suffrage for six years. The last category is renewed by thirds every two years.

On June 2, the Turkish electorate was called upon to designate 53 senators (including 50 seats which had become vacant normally and 3 incidentally). In the National Assembly, for which general elections had been held on October 10, 1965, there were five seats to be filled (likewise as a result of incidental vacancies).

Electoral System:

Deputies and elected senators are designated by direct and secret universal vote by all Turkish citizens of both sexes, at least 21 years of age, who enjoy full civil and political rights.

Candidates for election to the Lower House must be at least 30 years of age, able to read and write Turkish and in possession of their civil and political rights. Magistrates, officers, military officials and non-commissioned officers are barred from submitting candidatures while on active service.

Article 72 of the Constitution states that "every Turk who has completed his fortieth year and received a higher education, and who is eligible to be elected a deputy, may be elected to the Senate of the Republic".

Each of the 67 provinces constitutes an electoral constituency. Senators are elected on a party-list basis by relative majority, and the list which obtains most votes carries all the seats.

Since 1965, deputies have been elected on a party-list system by proportional representation, with calculation of the remainder on a national basis. However, last March, a law was passed by the National Assembly and Senate for a return to the pre-1965 system i.e. proportional distribution of seats according to the Hondt method. But this law was rejected by the Constitutional Court on grounds of unconstitutionality.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections:

The poll took place in peaceful circumstances in Ankara and Istanbul while, in the interior of the country, it was marked by a number of incidents.

The Justice Party, which had held the majority since 1965, carried 38 of the 53 Senate seats to be filled and all 5 Assembly seats. Turkey's oldest party, the Republican People's Party, founded by Kemal Ataturk, won 13, the Nation Party (Conservative from the social and religious point of view) 1, the Reliance Party (a dissident section of the Republican Party since 1967) 1 also, while the Independents lost 2 seats and the New Turkey Party its single seat.

Statistics:

New Distribution of Seats in the Senate

	Number of Members elected on June 2, 1968	Total Number of Seats in the Senate
Justice Party.	38 (+ 2)	98
Republican People's Party.	13 (+4)	33
Reliance Party.	1 (—4)	12
Nation Party.	1 (+1)	2
New Turkey Party.	0 (—1)	0
Independents.	0 (—2)	4
Republican Peasants National Party	0	2
Workers' Party.	—	1
<i>Ex-officio</i> Senators.		18
Presidential Nominees.		13
	53	183